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AUTHOR Brewer, William F.; Lichtenstein, Edward H.
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ABSTRACT

An experiment was carried out to examine individual story schemata and a story theory. The theory proposed relating structural characteristics of narratives to the reader's affective response and the reader's intuitions about what constitutes a story. Two levels of narrative structure are distinguished by the theory: the chronological sequence of events (event structure), and the order in which events are presented in the narrative (discourse structure). In the experiment, 103 college students read different versions/organizations of the same event structures, rated them for suspense and surprise at four points in the passages, and made judgments about the extent to which the narratives were stories. As predicted by the theory, (1) different discourse arrangements of the same event structures produced different patterns of affective response; and (2) discourse structures that produced suspense and resolution, or surprise and resolution, were judged to be stories, whereas narratives that did not show these affective patterns were not judged to be stories. The results were interpreted as suggesting a reinterpretation of the story grammar literature. (Author/RL)

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CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF READING

Technical Report No. 197

EVENT SCHEMAS, STORY SCHEMAS, AND STORY GRAMMARS

William F. Brewer and Edward H. Lichtenstein
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

December 1980

University of Illinois
at Urbana-Champaign
51 Gerty Drive
Champaign, Illinois 61820

Bolt Beranek and Newman Inc.
50 Moulton Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

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Abstract

The present paper investigates aspects of the individual's story schema. A theory is proposed relating structural characteristics of narratives to the reader's affective response and to the reader's intuitions about what constitutes a story. Two levels of narrative structure are distinguished: the event structure (the chronological sequence of events) and the discourse structure (the order in which events are presented in the narrative). An experiment was carried out to examine the story theory. Subjects read differently organized versions of the same event structures (i.e., different discourse structures), rated them for suspense and surprise at four points in the passages, and made judgments about the extent to which the narratives were stories. As predicted by the theory: (a) Different discourse arrangements of the same event structures produced different patterns of affective response. (b) Discourse structures which produced suspense and resolution, or surprise and resolution, were judged to be stories, whereas narratives which did not show these affective patterns were not judged to be stories. The results were interpreted as suggesting a reinterpretation of the story grammar literature.

Event Schemas, Story Schemas, and Story Grammars

The present study is directed at the investigation of narrative discourse, where narrative is used in the broad sense, to include any discourse which embodies a coherent series of temporal events. In particular, we have attempted to provide an account of the psychological processes that allow individuals to distinguish between narratives which are stories and those which are not. That is, we examined some fundamental aspects of an individual's schema for stories.

Story Grammars

Most of the recent work on narratives has involved a class of theoretical structures known as story grammars (Mandler & Johnson, 1977; Rumelhart, 1975; Stein & Glenn, 1979; Thorndyke, 1977). These grammars attempt to provide a theoretical account of the structure that causes one sample of discourse to be a coherent story while another arrangement of the same sentences is not a coherent story. While particular story grammars differ in detail, they all postulate a set of categories that must be included in a story and provide rules that specify the relations between the categories. A fundamental category that is included in all the story grammars is one that accounts for the character's actions in terms of the character's goals and the subgoals necessary to satisfy these goals.

There have been a large number of experiments directed at studying the use of story grammars in the memory and comprehension of text. The story grammars have been able to account for a variety of empirical findings:

Text which can be derived from a story grammar is more comprehensible than reorganizations of the text that cannot be derived from a story grammar (Thorndyke, 1977). Information higher in the hierarchical structure is better recalled than information lower in the hierarchy (Thorndyke, 1977) and is more likely to be included in a summary of the story (Rumelhart, 1977). The temporal order of information in text that is consistent with the structure of a story grammar is often better retained than is the order information for text that is not arranged in this fashion (Mandler, 1978; Thorndyke, 1977; Stein & Nezworski, 1978). Overall, these results have been taken to support the position that the structural relations represented in story grammars are used to understand and remember stories.

However, the results of a recent series of experiments by Lichtenstein and Brewer (1980) suggest a reinterpretation of the story grammar work. In that paper we examined subjects' memory for videotaped goal-directed events, and for narrative descriptions of these same events. The results supported the hypothesis that, in both cases, the information was interpreted and encoded in terms of a Plan schema, the subjects' non-linguistic knowledge of the structure of goal-directed events. Since our results for <u>both</u> observed events and for narratives were similar to the results found in the story grammar experiments, we suggested that most of the findings in the story grammar experiments may not have been due to the structural knowledge that readers have about <u>stories</u>, but to the fact that the subjects were using their nonlinguistic knowledge of events to organize and recall the event information contained in the narratives.

Schemas for Stories

While the recall results of the Lichtenstein and Brewer (1980) study were consistent with those found in the story grammar experiments, it seemed to us that the narratives used in our study (e.g., a dull description of someone setting up a projector) were not stories (cf. Black & Wilensky, 1979, for a similar argument). But this reinterpretation of the story grammar literature leads to an interesting problem. If story grammars turn out to be predominantly theories of schemas for the description of events (i.e., narratives), then what are stories? The purpose of this paper is to investigate the properties of the story schema (the knowledge about the structure of stories which underlies an individual's intuitions about what a story is).

It seems to us that what is missing from the structures provided by event and plan schemas are constructs relating to the emotive effects of stories--the conflict, the suspense (cf. Morgan & Sellner, 1980). The discourse force of stories appears to be to entertain the reader by arousing certain affective states--not simply to transmit information about sequences of events (cf. Brewer, 1980). What we need is a structural theory of stories, one in which the structures are related to the affective states produced in the reader.

In order to develop a theory of stories, it is necessary to make a theoretical distinction between two levels in narrative--the underlying events and the linguistic presentation of those events in the narrative.

This distinction has been a traditional one for those scholars in the humanities who take a structural approach to literature (cf. Erlich, 1980; Chatman, 1978). We will refer to these two levels as the event structure and the discourse structure. In the event structure, events are organized in their temporal sequence in some presumed event-world. At this level of analysis one's understanding of events and of characters' actions might be structured by means of event or plan schemas. In the discourse structure, events are organized in terms of their order of occurrence in the discourse. This distinction between the event and discourse structures provides advantages in theorizing about narratives that is analogous to the advantages that the distinction between abstract structure and surface structure provides for sentences.

When an author is writing a narrative, the resources of the language (tense, adverbs, etc.) and of literary convention (flashbacks, flashforwards, point of view, etc.) make it possible to take the information from the event level and place it in the discourse level in virtually any order desired. However, certain orderings of events in the discourse tend to produce particular affective outcomes (see Sternberg, 1978). For example, consider the following event structure: (1) BUTLER PUTS POISON IN WINE (2) BUTLER CARRIES WINE TO LORD HIGGINBOTHAM (3) LORD HIGGINBOTHAM DRINKS WINE (4) LORD HIGGINBOTHAM DIES. If an event structure contains an initiating event with a potentially significant outcome, ordering these events in the discourse structure in the same order in which they occur in the event structure will produce suspense. The suspense is created when the reader

becomes concerned about the outcome of the events set into motion by the initiating event. Thus, a discourse structure designed to produce suspense from this event sequence would be: (1) The butler put poison in the wine. (2) The butler carried the wine to Lord Higginbotham. (3) Lord Higginbotham drank the wine.

The production of surprise requires a different relationship between the discourse organization and event organization. In order to produce surprise in the reader, the author omits a significant underlying event or expository information from the discourse without letting the reader know that something has been omitted. Then, when something occurs that is a consequence of the missing information, the reader will not have been anticipating it and will be surprised. Thus, a discourse order designed to produce surprise would be: (2) The butler carried the wine to Lord Higginbotham. (3) Lord Higginbotham drank the wine. (4) Lord Higginbotham fell over dead.

The production of curiosity involves yet a different relation between discourse structure and event structure. In order to produce curiosity in the reader, the author leaves some significant event out of the discourse, but lets the reader know that the information is missing, thus causing the reader to become curious about the omitted events. A discourse structure designed to produce curiosity would be: (4) Lord Higginbotham fell over dead. Given only event (4), the reader should be curious about what caused Lord Higginbotham's death; if he was murdered, the reader should be curious

about who did it and how; in other words, the reader should be curious about events (1), (2), and (3).

The techniques discussed above all lead to the development of affective states in the reader. There are also a number of techniques for reducing these affective states. Resolution for suspense is accomplished by providing the reader with the outcome of the series of events that the reader has been concerned about. Resolution for surprise consists of the reader's reinterpretation of the preceding events in light of the surprising information which had been withheld until that point. Resolution for curiosity consists of providing the reader with information about the earlier events that the reader knows has been withheld.

By using the distinction between the event structure and the discourse structure, it is possible to develop a structural theory of stories which incorporates the affective characteristics that are not accounted for in story grammars. We propose that a story is a narrative in which information about events has been organized in the discourse structure to produce suspense and resolution, surprise and resolution, or curiosity and resolution. To produce suspense, the event structure must contain an initiating event with a potentially significant outcome. A significant outcome is an outcome with important consequences (good or bad) for one or more characters in the narrative.

In the earlier discussion of the discourse organization for suspense stories, we suggested that keeping the discourse order consistent with the underlying event order was an effective way to produce suspense, since

this arrangement keeps the reader concerned about the eventual outcome of the event sequence. However, it should also be possible to alter this basic suspense organization in ways that either increase or decrease suspense. Thus in "foreshadowing," information about a later event is given early in the discourse to increase the reader's concern for the character or to increase the significance of the outcome. On the other hand, if information is given early in the discourse about the eventual outcome of the significant event sequence, this should serve to reduce suspense.

The purpose of the experiment reported in this paper is to examine some of the predictions of this theory with respect to suspense and surprise. (The predictions relating to curiosity will not be investigated in this paper.) In particular, we test the following hypotheses:

(1) Narratives without significant events will not produce suspense.

(2) Narratives (containing an initiating event with a significant outcome) organized so that the discourse order matches the event order will produce suspense.

(3) Suspense narratives in which the discourse order matches the event order will show a sharp drop in suspense (resolution) at the point in the discourse where information about the outcome is given.

(4) Narratives organized to produce suspense and resolution will be stories.

(5) Narratives organized so as to produce suspense without resolution will not be stories.

(6) Suspense structures modified to give information about the significant outcome early in the discourse will show no suspense.

(7) Suspense structures modified to give information about the significant outcome early in the discourse will not be stories.

(8) Suspense structures with foreshadowing of significant later events will show heightened suspense.

(9) Narrative structures in which an initiating event with a significant outcome is withheld from the discourse structure will produce surprise in the reader when the outcome of the event occurs in the discourse.

(10) Narrative structures organized so as to produce surprise and resolution will be stories.

In order to test these hypotheses, we selected three event sequences of quite different content and then organized these event sequences in ways designed to produce discourse structures with the characteristics needed to test the theory. Next we obtained ratings on the affect produced at various stages in the reading of the narratives to see if these ratings were as predicted by the theory. Finally, we obtained a series of judgments on the structural properties of the narratives, to see if the affective ratings would predict which narratives were judged to be stories.

Method

Materials

Three event structures of different content were developed and each was organized into a set of six different discourse structures. For each discourse structure a narrative was written that was about two pages long, divided into four segments of about 1/3 to 3/4 page each. Each segment was printed on a separate page.

Base narrative. The base version of each of the three different event structures consisted of a description of a character pursuing some rather routine plans. The Trip Home described a man driving home from work, coping with several minor mechanical obstacles. A Day at the Beach described a man letting his mind wander as he relaxed on a Hawaiian beach. The Gardener described a poor gardener raking up and burning leaves in the yard around a mansion. In all these narratives some characterization was built in by letting the reader learn something of the character's thoughts, feelings, and background. By the ends of the narratives the characters achieved their goals or finished their plans: the man driving home arrived there; the sunbather walked back to his hotel; and the gardener finished his yard work and drove home.

In the other discourse versions of each narrative, an initiating event and an outcome event were inserted into the event structure. The initiating event was chosen so that the outcome was likely to have significance for the character. Initiating events: In The Trip Home a bomb with a 10-minute timer was activated in the car as the driver got in; in A Day at

the Beach an underwater earthquake set off a tidal wave heading for the island; and in The Gardener a car speeding past the mansion dumped a litter bag containing a sweepstakes ticket worth $100,000 onto the yard. Outcomes: As the driver closed his house door the bomb in his car exploded outside; the tidal wave hit the beach, but the character was just out of reach; and the gardener found the ticket.

Suspense-standard. In this condition, information about all the events in the event structure was given in chronological order in the discourse structure. The initiating event was described on the first page of the narrative and the outcome described on the fourth page.

The other three suspense versions also contained the initiating event on the first page, with the following additions or modifications:

Suspense-foreshadowing. The events were ordered as above, except that information concerning a later event, designed to increase concern about the outcome, was also described on the first page. Thus, readers were forewarned that the car with the bomb would soon be traveling down a dangerous pothole-filled road; that the sunbather would not see the tidal wave coming until it hit the shore; and that the owner of the mansion would come out and notice the cardboard ticket on the lawn.

Suspense-misarranged. Information concerning the eventual outcome was described on the first page. Readers were told that, because the driver would take the short-cut home, he would be safely inside his home before the bomb exploded; that the sunbather would be safe halfway up a cliff

behind the beach when the tidal wave arrived; and that a gust of wind would save the sweepstakes ticket from the fire, so that the gardener would become rich.

In the above three suspense conditions, pages 2 through 4 were identical.

Suspense-no-resolution. This version was exactly like the Suspense-Standard version except that page 4, which contained the outcome, was omitted.

Surprise. The initiating event was omitted from page 1. Thus, the passage was exactly like the Base Narrative for pages 1 to 3. On page 4, the outcome occurred exactly as in the suspense conditions, followed by a description of the omitted initiating event (as described on the first page of the suspense conditions).

Following each segment of each narrative were 7-point rating scales for suspense and surprise. The suspense scale asked the subjects to indicate "to what extent are you now in Suspense (concerned about what will happen or about the outcome)?" The surprise scale asked the subjects to indicate "In the portion just read, to what extent were you Surprised by any events or information in the passage?"

At the end of each narrative there was a page of 7-point rating scales measuring: (a) overall liking; (b) the extent to which the passage was, or was not, a "story" (with scale value 3 defined as "barely a story"); (c) satisfaction with the outcome; (d) how complete the passage seemed; (e) how effectively the information was arranged.

The Suspense-Standard discourse version of The Trip Home is given in Appendix A.

Procedure

Subjects were run individually and in groups. Each subject was given a booklet consisting of an instruction sheet and from 2 to 11 narratives, depending on the time available. The booklets included from 1 to 3 of the narratives from the present study, along with other passages of similar format from another study. No subject read more than one version from the same content set. Subjects receiving more than one passage from this study did not receive more than one with the same discourse organization (e.g., no more than one Suspense-Foreshadowing). The order of the passages in each booklet was random.

Subjects read the instructions and worked through the booklets at their own pace.

Subjects

The subjects were 103 undergraduates at the University of Illinois. Twenty subjects read each narrative version. For each version, 10 of the subjects were participants from Introductory Psychology or Educational Psychology classes, and 10 were paid undergraduate subjects.

Results

Affective Ratings During Reading

The results on the affective ratings for the six different discourse structures for each of the three event structures are given in Figures 1,

2, and 3. All predictions were tested with one-tailed t-tests, $p < .05$ unless otherwise noted.

Insert Figures 1, 2, and 3 about here.

Suspense. The Base Narratives were lower on the suspense ratings than any of the narratives organized in terms of the theory to produce suspense. For all three content versions, the Suspense-Standard narratives were significantly higher than their corresponding Base Narratives on the suspense ratings (averaged across segments 1, 2, and 3). There was also a dramatic drop in the suspense ratings for the Suspense-Standard narratives on the segment in which the resolution occurred for all three content versions (segment 3 compared to segment 4, $p < .001$). The curves for the Suspense-Foreshadowing narratives were not significantly different from the corresponding Suspense-Standard curves. The Suspense-Misarranged narratives showed significantly lower suspense ratings than the Suspense-Standard narratives for two of the three content versions (The Trip Home not significant), but significantly higher suspense ratings than the Base Narratives for two of the three content versions (The Gardener not significant).

Surprise. For all three content versions, the Surprise narratives were not significantly different from the Base Narratives on the surprise ratings for the average of the first three segments, but were significantly higher for the last segment ($p < .001$).

On the whole, the results of the affect rating task supported the theoretical relationships between the major discourse structures and affect. The next section of the results reports the data on the structural judgments to see if they are related to the shapes of the affective curves as predicted by the theory.

Structural Judgments

The mean structural ratings for the different discourse organizations for each content passage are given in Table 1. Question 2 was specifically designed to get subjects' intuitions about the degree to which a given

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Insert Table 1 about here.

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passage was or was not a "story." For each of the three content versions the Base Narratives received lower story ratings than any other discourse structure. The means of the Base Narratives for each of the three content versions were below 3.0 on the story rating scale, where 3.0 had been defined as "barely a story." The means for the Suspense-Standard narratives on the story ratings were all above 3.0, and they were significantly higher than the corresponding Base Narratives for all three content versions ($p < .001$). The Suspense-No-Resolution narratives were significantly below the corresponding Suspense-Standard narratives on the story ratings for all three content versions, and two of the three content versions were below 3.0 on the story rating scale (the mean for The Gardener passage was 3.2).

The Suspense-No-Resolution narratives showed the lowest scores on the completeness scale for any discourse structure and were significantly lower than those for the Suspense-Standard narratives for each of the three content versions.

The Suspense-Misarranged narratives showed significantly lower ratings on the arrangement effectiveness scale than the Suspense-Standard narratives for each of the three content versions. On the story rating, the means for the Suspense-Misarranged narratives were below those of the corresponding Suspense-Standard narratives on all three content versions, but none of the differences were significant. However, on the overall-liking scale, the Suspense-Misarranged narratives were significantly below the corresponding Suspense-Standard narratives for two of the three content versions (A Day at the Beach not significant). The Suspense-Foreshadowing narratives were not significantly different from the corresponding Suspense-Standard narratives on the story scale, the liking scale, or the arrangement effectiveness scale.

All three Surprise narratives showed ratings above 3.0 on the story rating scale, ratings which were significantly above those of the corresponding Base Narratives ($p < .001$).

Discussion

Overall, the results from both the affective rating tasks and the structural judgments provide considerable support for the theory of stories proposed in this paper.

The Base Narratives, which did not include an event with a significant outcome for one of the characters, showed low ratings on both suspense and surprise. The suspense discourse structures, which did include a significant event, showed a high suspense curve and then a sharp drop at the point of resolution. The surprise discourse structures showed a sharp spike on the surprise scale when information relating to the outcome of an omitted event occurred in the discourse. Contrary to our predictions, the suspense discourse structures with foreshadowing of future events did not show increased suspense. This may be due to problems with our particular examples. It is difficult to write good instances of foreshadowing, since the author must give some information that will increase the reader's concern about the outcome and yet not give away information about the outcome that will reduce suspense. It is possible that better examples of foreshadowing would show the predicted effect. The misarranged suspense discourse structures showed a reduction in suspense, although the suspense ratings were not reduced to the level of the base narrative as predicted. Informal questioning of our subjects suggests that it is almost impossible to give the reader enough information about the outcome of a significant event to completely reduce their concern about the outcome. Even when the author gives away some specific details of the outcome, as we did in these narratives, the reader can still find some events to remain concerned about.

The results from the affective ratings suggest that our technique for obtaining data about the subjects' affective responses during reading is successful. Taken as a whole, the data support the part of the theory

relating discourse structures to affective response. The Suspense-Standard, Suspense-Misarranged, and Surprise versions of each set had identical underlying event structures and yet produced quite different types of affective curves. Thus the differences in these affective responses to the narratives were a function of the differing arrangement of the events in the discourse structures and not a function of the event structure itself. In addition, the overall consistency of the results from the three different content versions (The Trip Home, A Day at the Beach, The Gardener)suggests that the theory is not content specific. The subject matter of these three event structures are very different, yet the theoretically important aspects of the affective curves are very similar across the content domains. These two findings clearly indicate that a theory of stories must include a level of discourse structure which mediates between the event structure and the affective response.

The results from the structural judgment tasks support the part of the theory relating affective response to intuitions about stories. The base narratives were clear cohesive prose, but the subjects' story ratings showed that the subjects did not think these narratives were stories. Suspense narratives without resolutions were also not considered to be stories. However, the corresponding narratives that were organized to produce suspense and resolution, and surprise and resolution were considered to be stories. The suspense narratives with foreshadowing produced judgments similar to the standard suspense narratives, as would be expected since the affect ratings were quite similar.

The misarranged suspense stories were not significantly below the standard suspense stories on story rating. This was not as predicted. A possible explanation for this inconsistent finding is that the affective ratings were only moderately reduced by the misarrangement of the discourse, and thus suspense might still have been strong enough to produce the story ratings. In this respect, it is interesting to note that our subjects gave lower enjoyment ratings to the misarranged suspense narratives. They also had no trouble telling that the misarranged narratives were badly told, since all three received ratings on the correct arrangement scale that were significantly lower than the Suspense-Standard version. These low ratings were not, however, simply due to the fact that the discourse order deviated from the chronological (event structure) order. The discourse organization of the Suspense-Foreshadowing versions of the stories also deviated from the event order, but these versions received correct arrangement ratings that were not significantly different from the Suspense-Standard versions.

In the overall pattern of results the presence or absence of a significant event covaries with the story ratings. Therefore, one could hypothesize that the presence of a significant event and its outcome in a narrative is sufficient to predict the story ratings. While it is probably true that a suspense discourse structure requires an event with a significant outcome, the fact that the surprise narratives also contained a significant event is an artifact of the fact that the experimental design required the use of the same event structure for all the different discourse structures. It seems

quite likely that there are surprise discourse structures that would be considered stories that do not contain a significant event. Thus, it seems unwise to adopt the hypothesis that stories are to be defined merely by the presence of a significant event in the event structure.

On methodological grounds one might object that, because the same subjects who made the affective ratings while reading also made the story judgments, the latter might have been influenced by the former. This interpretation would require that the affective rating task gave subjects explicit knowledge of the part of the theory relating the various patterns of affective response to the notion of "story." Such an occurrence seems very unlikely to us, but remains a possibility which could be explored empirically.

The present results, taken in conjunction with the findings of Lichtenstein and Brewer (1980), suggest the need for a reinterpretation of the story grammar approach. The story grammars were developed to be theories of subjects' knowledge about stories, yet they classify most narratives describing goal directed actions as stories. In contrast, the affective component of the present theory predicts that stories are a particular subclass of the larger set of coherent narratives. For example, both our base narratives and our suspense narratives would conform in many respects to most story grammars since they contain descriptions of goal-directed events, with subgoals, outcomes, etc. However, our subjects classified the base narratives as nonstories and the suspense narratives

as stories. Furthermore, to the extent that the Surprise and Suspense-Foreshadowing narrative deviate from the chronological (event structure) order, they may not meet the requirements of a story grammar. Yet, our subjects clearly considered these narratives to be stories. Thus, the present theory tends to correctly partition the class of stories from the larger set of narratives while the story grammars do not.

The present work suggests that there are important theoretical differences between schemas for events, schemas for narratives, and schemas for stories. In our view, events must be understood in terms of the underlying event, script, and plan schemas which an individual uses to interpret, comprehend, and recall them. Narratives require an additional level of analysis. In addition to the event and plan schemas that are used to understand events, a theory of narratives must include constructs to deal with the structural relationships between the event and discourse levels. Finally, since affective response is primarily a function of the discourse structure rather than of the event structure, a theory of stories must include the role of the discourse structure in producing the affective response curves, and the relationships between the affective responses and intuitions about stories. In terms of this distinction between types of schemas it seems to us that theories of comprehension will focus primarily on event schemas and narrative schemas, whereas theories dealing with the entertainment provided by stories will focus on story schemas.

While this paper is intended to provide a theoretical framework and methodology for the study of stories, the particular experiments reported

here have not examined all aspects of the reader's story schema. For instance, there may be other affective states, such as curiosity and humor, that have related discourse structures that also produce stories. Another important aspect of the reader's overall story schema is genre-specific information about stories. Thus, the reader of classic mystery stories knows that stories of this type will typically involve a brilliant detective who will solve the crime by the end of the story. A complete theory of story schemas will also have to incorporate this type of genre-specific information. Finally, more experimental work will be necessary to understand how the various aspects of the story schema may be involved in the comprehension, memory, and appreciation of stories.

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Appendix A

The Trip Home: Suspense-Standard Version

(Page 1)

The Trip Home

Sam Levine got into his old VW as the clock on City Hall struck six. Across the street a man waiting in a new Cadillac pushed a button, activating by remote control a 10 minute timer on a bomb hidden in Levine's car.

Sam was tired and dreaded the 20 minute drive home. He had arrived at the office several hours earlier than the rest of his staff. The job of District Attorney was more work than he had thought it would be when he ran for the office. Taking on the Mob in court was a tough, exhausting job.

(Page 2)

Sam turned the key, but nothing happened. "The ignition wire again," he thought, as he got out of his car and opened the hood. Finding a loose ignition wire, he tightened it and got back into the car. This time it started smoothly.

Sam became impatient to get home, so he decided to take the shortcut home. That way he could cut his trip home down to about 10 minutes. He pulled out of traffic, got off the main highway, and drove through town.

(Page 3)

Sam felt a little uneasy as he drove through the busy sections of town. He began daydreaming, thinking about how quiet it would be when he got home. Carol and the girls were visiting the grandparents. Suddenly, his car bounced across a rather deep pothole. Startled, Sam began to pay more attention to his driving, and managed to avoid most of the other holes.

As he got into the quieter section of town, Sam became aware of a noise coming from the front of the car. Wondering what it was, he pulled over to the side, got out, and walked around to the front. He checked the tires, and found that a rock had gotten stuck in the tread of the right tire. He pulled the rock out and got back inside. He looked at his watch--it was 6:09--and started on the last stretch of his trip home.

(Page 4)

As he drove, Sam looked forward to making himself some spinach crepes for supper. No one else liked them, so while the family was away was a good time to make them. Finally arriving home, he stopped the car, got out, and slowly walked up the winding path to the house. He unlocked the door and walked inside.

Just as Sam closed the door behind him, his VW exploded into a fountain of flame. By taking the short-cut home, Sam had thwarted the Mob's attempt to make an out-of-court settlement.

Table 1

Mean Structural Judgments for the Narratives

The Trip Home

Rating Scales	Base Narrative	Suspense-Standard	Suspense-Misarranged	Suspense-Foreshadowing	Suspense-No-Resolution	Surprise Narrative
Liking	2.15	4.85	3.65	4.30	3.85	4.30
Story Rating	2.45	5.05	4.50	4.45	2.75	4.30
	2.15	4.90	3.90	4.55	1.60	3.95
Completeness	2.75	4.90	4.95	5.15	1.25	4.35
Arrangement	4.35	5.45	3.10	4.75	5.05	4.25

A Day at the Beach

Rating Scales	Base Narrative	Suspense-Standard	Suspense-Misarranged	Suspense-Foreshadowing	Suspense-No-Resolution	Surprise Narrative
Liking	3.25	4.50	3.95	4.25	3.50	3.75
Story Rating	2.35	4.90	4.25	5.00	2.60	3.90
Outcome	2.10	4.25	3.40	4.25	1.55	3.20
Completeness	2.75	4.65	4.90	4.90	1.30	3.40
Arrangement	4.30	5.05	2.95	5.40	4.75	4.85

The Gardener

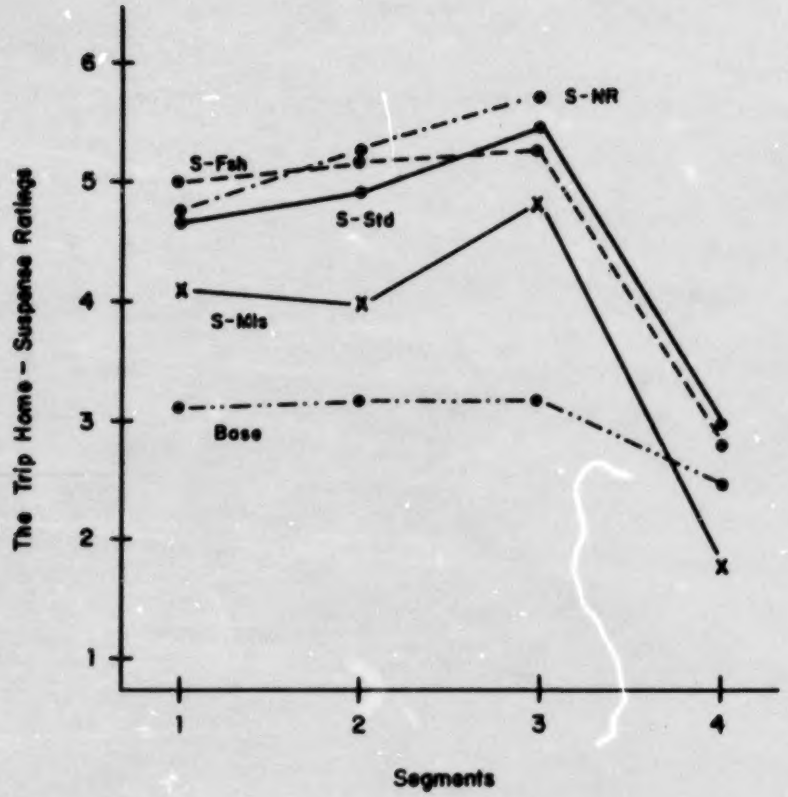
Rating Scales	Base Narrative	Suspense-Standard	Suspense-Misarranged	Suspense-Foreshadowing	Suspense-No-Resolution	Surprise Narrative
Liking	2.40	4.75	3.15	4.45	3.45	4.40
Story Rating	2.90	5.10	4.35	5.20	3.20	4.70
Outcome	2.10	5.30	3.75	5.00	1.80	4.25
Completeness	3.40	4.85	4.35	5.10	2.55	4.80
Arrangement	4.20	5.50	2.15	4.95	4.85	5.40

Figure Captions

Figure 1. Mean suspense and surprise ratings at points 1, 2, 3, and 4 for The Trip Home. Conditions: Base, Suspense-Standard (S-Std), Suspense-Misarranged (S-Mis), Suspense-Foreshadowing (S-Fsh), Suspense-No-Resolution (S-NR), and Surprise.

Figure 2. Mean suspense and surprise ratings at points 1, 2, 3, and 4 for A Day at the Beach.

Figure 3. Mean suspense and surprise ratings at points 1, 2, 3, and 4 for The Gardener.


The Trip Home - Suspense Ratings
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Base
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2
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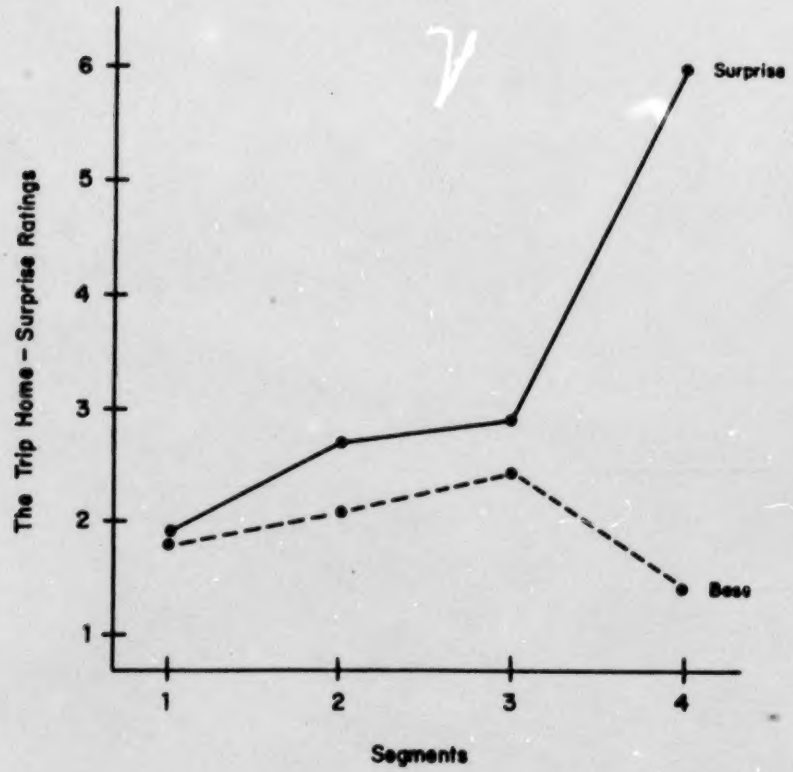
Segments


The Trip Home - Surprise Ratings
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4
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Surprise
Base
1
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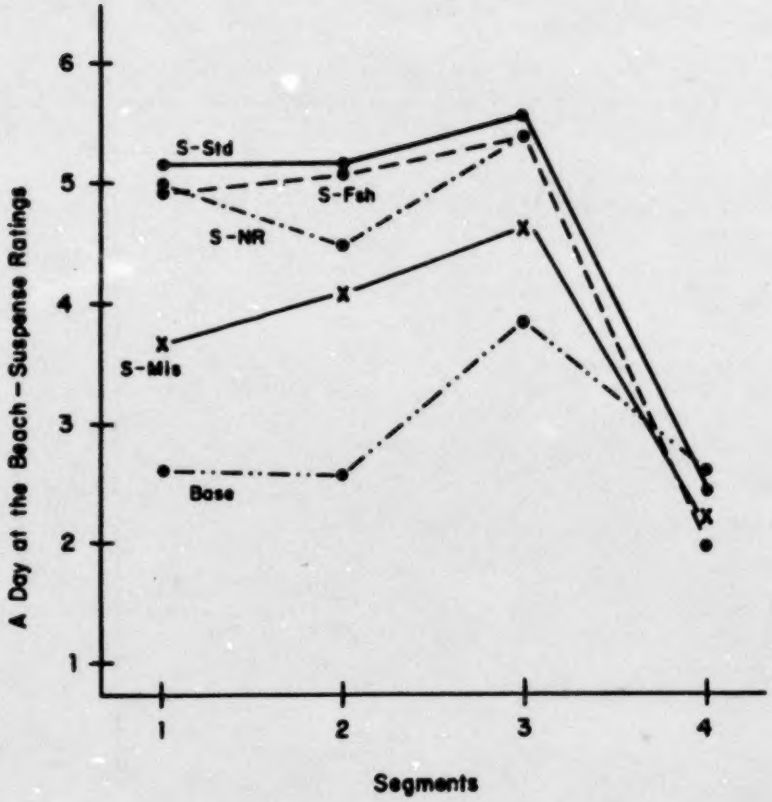
Segments


A Day at the Beach – Suspense Ratings
6
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S-Std
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S-Mis
Base
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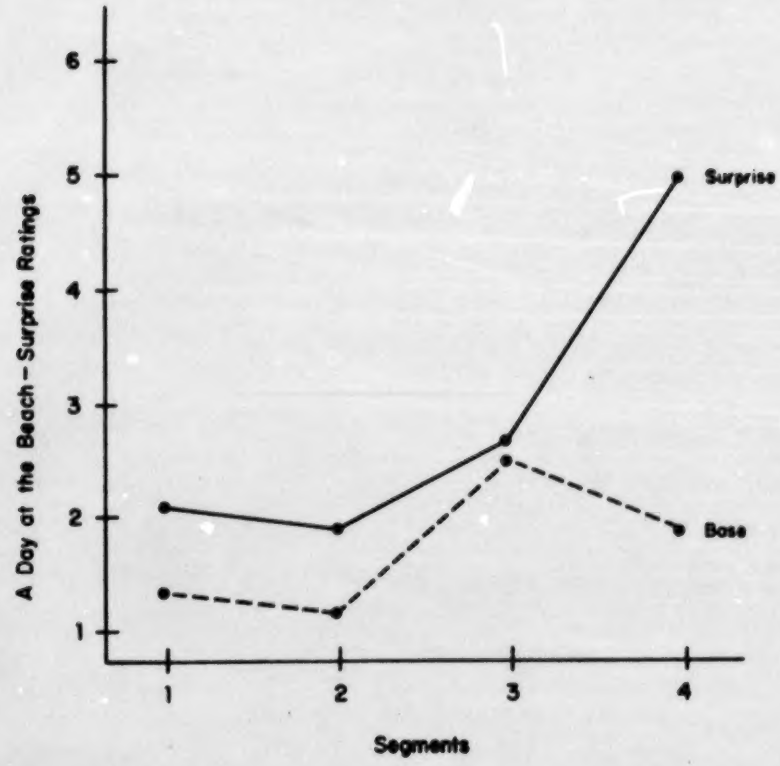
2
3
4
Segments

34


A Day at the Beach – Surprise Ratings
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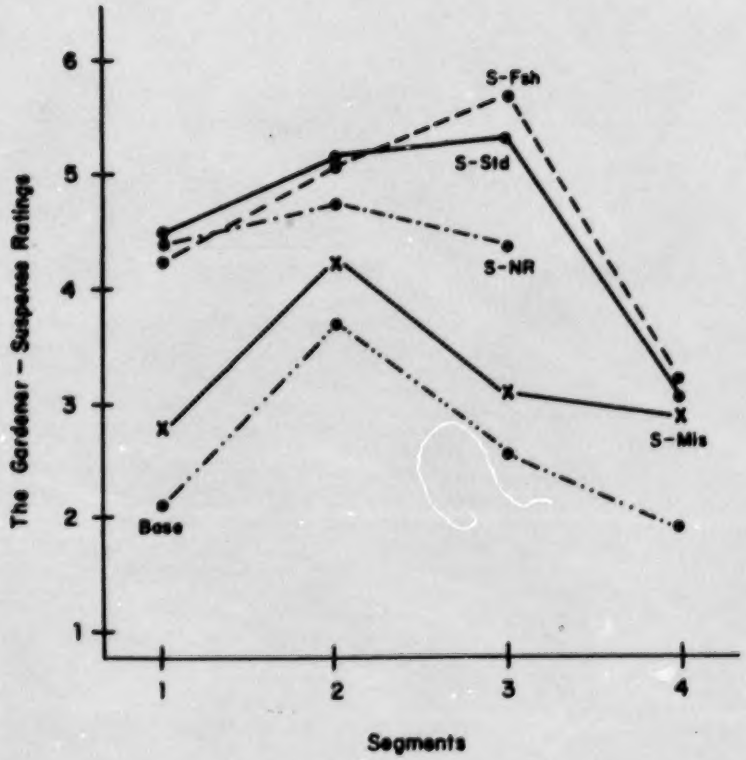
The Gardener - Suspense Ratings
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S-Std
S-NR
S-Mis
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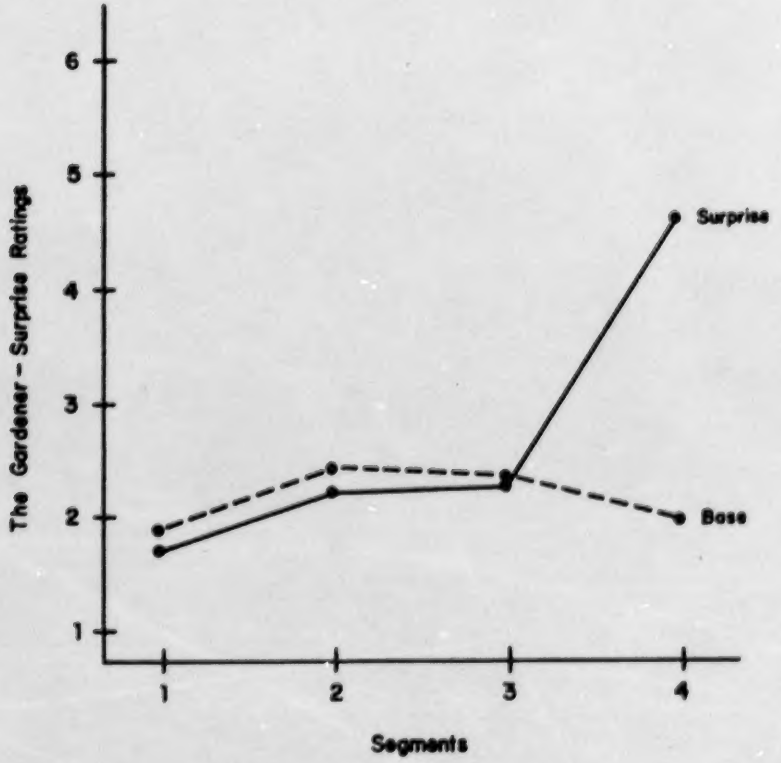
Segments


The Gardener - Surprise Ratings
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Surprise
Base
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4
Segments

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